

PART 1

INTRODUCTION



I. BACKGROUND AND FUTURE DIRECTION FOR THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

America has become what no one once thought possible: a dynamic democracy on a continental scale, with a very diverse population, yet unified by a durable constitution and political institutions. It has prospered in good measure because a free people have continuously used human knowledge to create and innovate.

Our United States is the only great world civilization whose basic unifying institutions were created entirely in the age of print. We have more recently led the world in creating a revolutionary new electronic form of communicating knowledge. America, as a knowledge-based democracy, needs to maximize its utilization of the information contained in digital files, the knowledge contained in books, and the wisdom of those who curate and live with both. The Library of Congress can and must play a central role in meeting this national need—particularly at a time when America’s pressing economic and security concerns depend increasingly on better knowledge and understanding of the world.

Our founding fathers linked governance to learning — and legislation to libraries — from the very first time the Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in July 1774 — inside a library. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution was designed to promote “the progress of science and useful arts.” The first Joint Committee of the Congress in the new capital of Washington, D.C., was created for its library. The Congress created the world’s first nationwide body of library-based public universities when the Morrill Act paved the way for land grant universities at the state level — underscoring the basic Jeffersonian belief that democracy, to be dynamic, had to be based on ever more people using ever more knowledge in ever more ways.

The Congress of the United States has created the largest repository of human knowledge in the history of the world, and has preserved the mint record of American intellectual creativity by placing the Copyright Office in its library. The mission of the Library of Congress is to acquire, preserve, and make accessible the world’s knowledge for the Congress and for America’s use and to maintain a universal collection for future generations. That mission does not change, but its sweep and its increasing importance for America’s future require a comprehensive strategy solidly based on what the Library of Congress has become — and can uniquely do for America in the early 21st century. **Four central features of the Library point the way:**

The unparalleled collections of the Congress's Library are America's **strategic reserve of the world's knowledge and information**. With more than 126 million items in its collections, the Library is the only institution in the world that comes even close to acquiring everything important for American culture (except for medicine and agriculture, which have their own national libraries) in whatever language and format it is produced. The Library's unique web of exchanges, of overseas offices (Islamabad, Cairo, Jakarta, New Delhi, Nairobi, Rio de Janeiro) and its U.S. copyright deposits generate an inflow of 22,000 items a day, of which we retain 10,000.

Congress's Library is the **central hub of two important knowledge networks**: America's own national network of libraries, archives, and other repositories and an international network of major research libraries. The Library of Congress is recognized as the leading provider of free, high-quality educational content on the Internet. Just as Congress endorsed the Library of Congress to provide other libraries with its cataloging data for print material in the early 20th century, so it has now mandated its Library to create, in the early 21st century, a plan for a distributed national network for preserving and making accessible digital material.

The Library of Congress provides the **principal research support for the Congress**.

The Library serves the American people **as a filter and source of knowledge navigation** for the increasingly chaotic tide of information and knowledge flooding the Internet.

The **Library is a knowledge center** for accumulating information and helping assemble it into scholarly knowledge and practical wisdom for both the entire Congress and all Americans. It promotes "the progress of science and useful arts" (1) through the Copyright Office by protecting intellectual property rights and preserving past American creativity as a basis for future creativity, and (2) through the Library's leadership role in bringing primary materials of American history as well as basic information about the Congress free of charge electronically to localities throughout the nation.

Additional facilities off Capitol Hill will enable the Library to store more securely its treasures — thanks to Congressional support for the Fort Meade, Md., modules currently being built and thanks to the prospect of an unprecedentedly generous private donation from the Packard Humanities Institute for the new National Audio-Visual Conservation Center in Culpeper, Va.

Thanks to the continuing support of the Congress, its Library is in a position both to sustain its historical mission in the new arena of electronic information and to make major new

contributions to the global and domestic needs of the United States in an increasingly competitive and dangerous world. The Library is an information and knowledge-gathering center unique in the world. In the networked world of the Internet, the Library must increasingly perform its historic mission in a new way. It must combine leadership functions that only it can perform with catalytic activities and new, networked relationships with other nonprofit repositories and productive private sector institutions.

The Library will need the trained staff, the flexible structures, and the mission focus to perform those roles that are central to its mission and for which it is uniquely equipped to perform. The Library will have to sustain much of its present operations but at the same time face **three major changes that reach across all aspects of the Library in the next decade:**

The Library's dedicated **workforce must**, to a large extent, **be retrained or renewed**. Facing a disproportionately large number of experienced personnel at or nearing retirement age, we must create a workforce that will in the aggregate provide even greater diversity of both backgrounds and technical skills. The staff for the 21st century must include highly skilled and well-trained experts in the new technologies of the information age and the traditional scholarly substantive expertise required by the richness and variety of the collections. Developing a retooled workforce, in many ways, is the most important single task the Library faces in the next decade.

The Library will have to create **new structures of sufficient flexibility** to enable the Library **to deal with the fast-moving ever-changing electronic universe and to integrate these materials seamlessly into the massive analog collections** of the Library. These structures must be set up in such a way that they can (a) work effectively in an increasingly distributed and networked environment; and, at the same



time, (b) guarantee fast, full, and secure global coverage for the Congress. The Library largely has been able to provide comprehensive information in the analog universe, but it may have to share this responsibility with others in the digital network. The priority requirement to respond to Congressional and Congressional Research Service (CRS) needs will require high standards of dependability in all partners.

The Library must concentrate more of its overall energies and talents on developing the **deep substantive scholarly expertise** that will enable the staff to filter, navigate, and objectively interpret knowledge for the Congress and the nation. It will be important in the future **not only to provide access to** the Library’s collections, **but also to extend and deepen the objective guidance** that both the Congress and the scholarly world will need in confronting the inundation of unfiltered information that is appearing on the Internet and will increasingly characterize the global information environment.

The Congress of the United States creates the laws and oversees the governmental functions of America. It has created within its own branch an enormous, but so far only partially realized, knowledge and information asset for sustaining both the intelligent governance of the United States in the 21st century and the prosperity of our people. The present management and staff of the Library are suggesting an optimal strategy for sustaining the service mission of this institution — and of responsibly extending it for the health of our republic.

II ○ VISION AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Library leads the nation in ensuring access to knowledge and information and in promoting its creative use for the Congress and its constituents. More specifically, by 2008, the Library plans to have achieved the following strategic outcomes:

The core national programs of Library Services and the Office of Strategic Initiatives) are recognized to have sustained the breadth and depth of the universal artifactual and digital collections. These programs will also have provided positive, verifiable assurance that the Library is acquiring, establishing bibliographic control, preserving, providing 24/7 access, and securing the collections for future generations regardless of the information’s format.

The Library’s National Audio-Visual Conservation Center is operating and is recognized as having assumed international leadership in providing film and recorded sound preservation and accessibility. The new storage facilities at Fort Meade are operating

and are recognized as an outstanding example of how to perform off-site storage, long-term preservation, and rapid access to the material.

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped has completed the development of digital talking book technology and has begun conversion to use of the technology through distribution of the new talking book machines.

The Law Library of Congress provides high-quality and timely legal research, analysis and reference services to the Congress; develops, maintains, and makes accessible a comprehensive legal collection for use by the Congress, executive branch agencies, courts and others; and will have achieved and maintained an enhanced electronic system involving almost all countries important to the U.S. Congress in order to provide it with more comprehensive, authoritative, and timely global legal information.

The Copyright Office is a leading advocate of an effective national copyright system that serves both creators and users of copyrighted works; is the primary advisor to the Congress on national and international copyright matters and is a relied-upon source of information and assistance to federal agencies and the judiciary on these matters; is providing its services, including registrations, electronically; and is creating registration records compatible with the Library's cataloging system.

The Congressional Research Service has succeeded in restructuring both its permanent workforce and its supplemental interim capacity so that it is always the first-choice research provider of the Congress for authoritative, nonpartisan, timely, and objective research and public policy analysis in support of legislative deliberations. It will have improved both the quality of its analysis as well as its overall research capacity.

The Library has implemented human capital management initiatives resulting in recruitment, development, and maintenance of a diverse, well-trained, highly skilled, and high-performing workforce to filter, navigate, analyze, and objectively interpret knowledge for the Congress and the nation. Further, the workforce functions in a management-supported environment characterized by open communication, innovative thinking, leading and managing change, and the effective and efficient program and supporting processes rivaling the best commercially available services. Special emphasis will be paid for providing flexible rewards and responsibility for staff with substantive expertise that leads to productivity improvements.

III. MISSION

The Library's mission is to make its resources available and useful to the Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations.

IV. VALUES

A. Service

Analyze our customers' needs and make every effort to meet them. Continually strive for process improvement.

Strategy: Find out what our internal and external customers need and make every effort to meet their needs, including changing our procedures and processes when necessary.

B. Quality, Effectiveness, and Excellence

Put the highest quality into every aspect of our business activities.

Strategy: Invest in our people through training and development programs to ensure a competent workforce. Make every effort to manage our programs and do our jobs with the highest standard of excellence and integrity. Every staff member (individual employee, executive, manager, supervisor, and team leader) has the right to expect every other staff member will "give his or her best effort" to every task, all of the time.

C. Innovation

Look for new and creative methods to improve our services.

Strategy: Foster an environment that encourages and rewards creativity, risk-taking, experimentation (even if these efforts are not successful), and continuous learning.

D. Fairness

Treat staff and customers with fairness, respect, and tolerance.

Strategy: Do not tolerate discrimination in any form or at any level in the organization. Every staff member is confident of receiving fair treatment from the day he or she applies for a position at the Library through the day he or she leaves Library employment. Evenhandedly encourage and celebrate good work, provide developmental opportunities to learn new skills or improve performance, and refuse to

tolerate poor performance and/or disruptive behavior from our subordinates or our peers.

E. Participation

Encourage involvement of all stakeholders (e.g., management, staff, customers, and partners) in the processes of planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving programs and activities.

Strategy: Promote a collaborative environment that fosters an exchange of ideas. Managers at all levels in the organization involve both staff and stakeholders in substantive ways and both management and staff strive for buy-in and successful implementation of new ideas through listening, flexibility and keeping the interests of the Library and its mission in the forefront.

F. Communication

Communicate clearly, consistently, and openly in a timely manner.

Strategy: Share the right information, in the right format, with the right people at the right time.

